

Message Text

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73

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-10 LAB-06

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 L-03 NSC-10

PA-04 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 AID-20

NIC-01 SY-10 OPR-02 OC-06 CCO-00 A-01 USSS-00 FBO-01

PC-04 OMB-01 CU-04 DRC-01 /200 W

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FM AMEMBASSY LIMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7827

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, PINT, PE

SUBJECT: AREQUIPA GENERAL STRIKE CONTINUES

REF: LIMA 8418

1. AREQUIPA GENERAL STRIKE IN SUPPORT OF ARRESTED SUTEP TEACHER LEADERS CONTINUED TO EXPAND NOVEMBER 19 INTO INDUSTRIAL ZONE WHILE CONTINUING TO PARALYZE COMMERCE AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN CITY AS WELL AS SOUTHERN PERU RAIL SYSTEM. OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF UNIONS NOW PARTICIPATING IN STRIKE UNDER LEADERSHIP OF ANTI-MILGOV LEFT-LED FRONT. AFTER CALM DAY SUNDAY, DEMONSTRATORS NOV. 19 AGAIN CLASHED WITH POLICE IN AREQUIPA, STONED CARS, ERECTED STREET BARRICADES AND INDULGED IN RIOTING SIMILAR TO THAT OF PAST TWO WEEKS. ONLY REPORTED SIGNS OF STRIKE WEAKENING WAS REAPPEARANCE OF SOME BUSES AND TAXIS IN SUBURBS AND GENERAL INCREASE IN PRIVATE AUTO TRAFFIC.

2. MOSCOW-LINE COMMUNISTS AND THEIR DEPARTMENTAL LABOR

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FEDERATION, UNABLE BY FRONTAL ATTACKS TO PREVENT OR WEAKEN

STRIKE, ARE NOW TRYING TO PLAY OSTENSIBLE CONCILIATORY ROLE. CGTP'S SEC-GEN GUSTAVO ESPINOSA HAS THEREFORE GONE TO AREQUIPA AND VOWED TO REMAIN THERE UNTIL STRIKE SETTLED. OPPOSITION CTP IS FOLLOWING APRA LINE OF WATCHFUL NON-INVOLVEMENT, BUT DID PLACE PAID AD IN NOV. 18 LA PRENSA CALLING ON MILGOV TO RELEASE AND REHIRE SUTEP TEACHER LEADERS WHILE AT SAME TIME CONDEMINING POLITICAL LINE OF SUTEP. CTP'S FEW TRADE UNION AFFILIATES IN AREQUIPA ARE REPORTEDLY PARTICIPATING IN STRIKE ON BASIS REGIONAL SOLIDARITY.

3. AREQUIPA UNIVERSITY RADIO STATION SUPPORTING STRIKERS WHICH WAS OFF AIR DUE TO DYNAMITING (REFTEL) IS BROADCASTING AGAIN.

4. SHORTAGES OF GASOLINE, MEAT, MILK AND OTHER PRODUCTS ARE BEING REPORTED FROM CUZCO AND AREQUIPA, MOSTLY DUE TO RAIL SHUTDOWN. WE HAVE UNCONFIRMED REPORT THAT PUNO AND CUZCO ALSO PARALYZED BY STRIKE AND BARRICADED ROADS. REMAINDER OF PERU APPARENTLY NORMAL EXCEPT FOR CLOSED SCHOOLS AND LARGELY PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATIONS IN SOME TOWNS. LEFTIST ANTI-MILGOV GROUPS REPORTEDLY PLANNING ANOTHER LIMA DEMONSTRATION NOVEMBER 23.

5. COMMENT: MILITARY HAVE ALREADY BEEN FORCED TO TAKE OVER OPERATION OF ONE HYDROELECTRIC STATION NEAR AREQUIPA, AND CONTINUED STRIKE MAY FORCE MILGOV INTERVENTION TO SUPPLY GASOLINE AND OTHER ESSENTIALS TO INTERIOR TOWNS. NATURE OF SUCH INTERVENTION OR EFFORTS BY STRIKERS TO SABOTAGE SUCH FACILITIES COULD IGNITE SITUATION, BUT THUS FAR MILGOV REACTIONS REMAINS MILD AND ESSENTIALLY DEFENSIVE. MOST OF ARRESTED DEMONSTRATORS WHO ARE NOT LEADERS OF THEIR POLITICAL FACTIONS ARE APPARENTLY BEING RELEASED AFTER PROCESSING, AND ATTEMPTS TO MEDIATE ARE CONTINUING.
BELCHER

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